

Intercollegiate Athletics Committee Meeting

Director's Conference Room - Casanova Center

October 1, 2003

Committee Members and Guests Present: Renee Baumgartner, Susan Gary, Gary Gray, Dave Heeke, Jim Hutchison, Tom Larson, Jonah Lee, Bill Moos, Rick Mowday, Jim O'Fallon, Brad Shelton, Dan Williams, and Debbie Nankivell.

Update from Dan Williams

Dan Williams, vice president for administration, thanked the members of the committee for their service. Dan informed the group about the creation of the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee and its evolution into its current form. The committee was designed to have representative constituents of the university become well informed about the department to advise the university president on athletics policy issues and to counsel the athletic director. It is important that faculty representatives be knowledgeable about the program and report to the university president and the faculty senate on athletics issues. Even though the athletic department is now self-supporting, the need still exists for the IAC to ensure that athletics remains accountable to the university.

One of the IAC's primary responsibilities is to provide the athletic director with well informed advice on policy issues. The committee serves as a bridge between the university as a whole and the department, helping to ensure that the department is in harmony with the university's mission. A description of the charge and responsibilities, membership, and reporting function of the IAC was distributed to committee members.

Two years ago, President Frohnmayer felt it would be helpful to have a university task force look into the relationship between campus and the athletic department. Faculty wanted a better understanding of the university's athletics program and were concerned about the welfare of the student-athletes. Many issues were investigated by the task force and a final report was issued last spring. The findings were positive, however, athletics reform is still an issue that some members of the task force want to pursue.

Athletics will continue to be center stage this year with continuing discussions about national athletics reform. The "arms race" and how to maintain competitiveness in athletics without compromising academics are issues of concern at the UO and nationally. Locally, the symbolism of the new arena project and the remodeled locker room will likely instigate discussions about the role of athletics in academics. The IAC should have an important role in these discussions.

Brad Shelton voiced concern if the intent of the task force is to have the IAC initiate national athletics reform. He suggested that the committee can best serve to assist campus groups investigating reform issues and faculty leadership may want to bring specific concerns to the committee. Renee Baumgartner stated that she believes that university presidents have the real power to reform more than faculty groups.

Dan Williams stated that the perceived imbalance between academics and athletics is troublesome to faculty. The success of the UO's athletics program, the new facilities, and the department's financial

stability are not comparable to departments on campus, which has caused some faculty members to question what is more important to the university - academics or athletics. It is important for all parties to be well informed before making assumptions. The athletics task force helped to dispel some prevalent misinformation about the university's athletics program.

Susan Gary raised the concern that she has been on the IAC for over a year and has never advised the president on athletics policy issues or felt the committee provided advice to the athletic director. She felt the committee usually heard about issues only after the fact. There are concerns raised by faculty about the public's perception of the university since it seems to be viewed primarily through the athletic department.

The way the IAC chooses to function is up to the committee members. The committee needs to advise the department before decisions are made, not after the fact. Brad Shelton stated that some of the department's decisions must be made within a short time frame without ample time for widespread discussion. Brad, as the committee chair, has routinely been in contact with Dave Heeke, the committee liaison from athletics, on an as-needed basis between the monthly IAC meetings. Susan Gary, Jim Hutchison, and Brad Shelton agreed to serve on the IAC's Executive Subcommittee and will discuss issues that occur between meetings that require a quick response.

Jim O'Fallon, faculty athletics representative, stated that faculties from many institutions are discussing several issues regarding athletics at the national level. It is beneficial for IAC members who have been exposed to factual issues to assist in responding to other campus groups or in providing input at UO governing meetings.

Jim Hutchison stated that it may be helpful to have IAC members find a way to inform faculty about specific athletics issues, perhaps using the web to disseminate information. The final report of the athletics task force could be helpful in clarifying misinformation about the UO's athletics program.

Jim Hutchison also said that it is difficult to understand why some faculty members do not view the athletic department's innovation and success as positive for the university and something to aspire to by all departments on campus. The perceived imbalance between academics and athletics is the crux of the frustration from campus. The feeling is that it is harder to raise funds for academics than athletics.

Athletic Department Update

The university is a member of the Pacific-10 Conference and an NCAA Division IA program, offering 18 sports, with a \$37 million annual budget, 150 employees, and satellite offices focusing on fund-raising and marketing in Portland and Medford. The department structure includes the athletic director, two senior associate athletic directors - Renee Baumgartner and Dave Heeke, six associate athletic directors, and six assistant athletic directors who oversee all areas of the department. The staff's primary mission is to educate and graduate all student-athletes and ensure that each student-athlete has a positive university experience that they will savor the rest of their lives. The department's mission statement was distributed to all committee members.

Bill Moos accepted the athletic director's position nine years ago because of the tremendous academic reputation of the UO, the quality of life, the affiliation with the Pac-10 Conference and the administration's support and expectation for the athletics program to be competitive at the Division IA level. The major concern to being competitive in the conference, where most of the population base resides in southern California, is to level the playing field since we do not have a huge TV or fan base and the climate is not sunny year-round. To do this, Bill has concentrated the department's efforts primarily in two areas:

- \$ Investing in facilities to ensure that recruits meet their full academic and athletic potential and dispel the myth of weather hampering performance; and

- \$ Developing an aggressive marketing plan to bring positive attention to the university. When people see something about the University of Oregon, they want to know more about it - both academically and athletically.

The department has reinvested in its success, freeing up funds previously received by the department from the university. The original plan was to decrease university support over a five year period, however, the plan was accelerated by four years, resulting in the department no longer receiving university support.

It is essential that the department find revenue streams to maintain its self-sufficiency. The expansion of Autzen and the new arena project are the primary means of generating new revenue. The goal is to

continue to hire and retain good people and to have the department be seen as a destination, not a stepping stone to other jobs. Stability in the coaching staff is especially important in the revenue producing sports, which fund the remaining department programs.

Unfortunately, the department has exhausted reserves to continue to build and renovate facilities. Some donations for recent projects are spread over a few years, requiring the use of reserve funds to pay for projects during the building process. A focus for the next few years is to try to rebuild the department's reserves.

The department needs to continue to be innovative, act responsibly, and run a clean program. The national spotlight is on the UO and the department needs to continue to be aggressive in marketing the program and the university.

The decision on the site for the new arena project is expected very soon. All identified sites have obstacles which will need to be addressed. Discussions are expected to take place with parties affected by the decision once the site has been selected.

Next IAC Meeting

The next IAC meeting has been scheduled for 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 5th, in the Johnson Hall Conference Room.

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